



FeatherstoneYoung

PRESS ENQUIRIES

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PRESS RELEASE**TÛ PAWB****09/2018**

TÛ Pawb (Everybody's House) is a new model for an arts venue, designed by architects Featherstone Young. It relocates Oriel Wrexam – formerly Wrexham Arts Centre – within one of the town's three market spaces, The People's Market: an existing purpose-built 1990s multi-storey car park and market hall. The new facilities include art galleries, market stalls, performance space, a learning centre, cafes and bars. Studios and meeting rooms for artists and gallery staff overlook newly created double-height spaces.

The project, commissioned by Wrexham County Borough Council, with support from Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government, presents a new typology which reinvents underused public infrastructure enlivening it with cultural uses, ensuring the sustainability of both during financially challenging times.

Architects Featherstone Young and the TÛ Pawb team have had to rethink the civic role of cultural programming, creating a new model which challenges the traditional art gallery environment and offers a looser and more experimental space that is rooted in the community and everyday life. Featherstone Young refers to this as the 'baggy space' concept, where designers and curators create a light-touch framework which enables others to fill the gaps. This approach helps create a place that can be used habitually, and opens up the potential for meaningful experiences amongst a wider public.

The building is strategically located between the town centre and edge-of-town attractions, which, together with the market and car park uses, offers opportunities to attract more people to the arts, as they traverse it as a cut-through route.

The retrofit design scheme introduces cuts into the existing precast concrete building fabric bringing natural light deep into the plan and creating dramatic vertical connections between floors.

Laterally a new streetscape behaves as an extension of Wrexham's town centre, and plays on the longstanding, popular use of the building as a shortcut to cross the town and is conveyed through the use of squares, signposts, billboard and street furniture.

An array of facilities is housed within the building: a mix of arts spaces, market trading and food retailers occupy the ground floor, with studios and offices on the first floor, whilst the original car park remains in use on the upper storeys. When the centre reopened locally in April it welcomed back market stall owners to trade alongside new food retailers in new light-filled dynamic space featuring exhibition spaces which are being programmed by TÛ Pawb. Users now pass through the transformed spaces for a very different experience: bright and spacious volumes animated by cultural activities and, more prosaically, longer trading hours that include early morning coffee and late-night drinks.

The transformation of the building is announced externally with a new entrance and the graphic treatment of the external facades, employing the new TÛ Pawb name and logo

designed by Cardiff-based agency Elfen. This signals Tŷ Pawb's presence within the town, and in the future will function as a blank canvas for a changing display of artwork.

Key landmarks within the Tŷ Pawb interior streetscape include:

- Wal Pawb (Everyone's Wall), a large-scale, revolving billboard with rolling programme of artwork to be selected by Oriel Wreccsam and local market traders; the first artwork is by artist Katie Cuddon
- Sqwar y Bobl (The People's Square), a new flexible space at the centre of the market that provides a testing ground to experiment and to bring together the arts, market and community users.

Other facilities include:

- Gallery 1
- Gallery 2
- Performance space
- Shop
- Food hall
- Market stalls
- Administration spaces on the first floor

At Tŷ Pawb the architect's 'baggy space' concept is particularly visible at Sqwar y Bobl, which is demarcated by heavy industrial plastic sheets suspended on rails as curtains. Translucent yet weighty enough to divide the space when concurrent activities are programmed, they allow for flexibility, enabling informal, spontaneous events.

Featherstone Young has worked closely with furniture maker Tim Denton, who, in the spirit of Tŷ Pawb's mission to engage the public, has designed the furniture and built it collaboratively with community groups in workshop sessions. Primary school pupils worked on the reception desk and a number of storage boxes; area artists made the supports for the Sqwar y Bobl trestle tables; shop furniture and market hall benches were built by local college students; a wood-working group latheturned the stool hooks and table legs; and members of the public participated in workshops to create the flexi-space stools and boxes for Siop//Shop. As well as learning key skills, participants have contributed visibly to the legacy of Tŷ Pawb.

Sarah Featherstone said:

"From the outset this was a very exciting project for us. The mix of facilities presented a challenge from which we developed a new model that breaks from the traditional art gallery environment and provides an opportunity to be more relevant to people in their everyday lives. The car park typology also presented us with challenges – notably, a heavy concrete structure with low ceilings and deep plan, which we opened up to be lighter and more welcoming. A palette of raw, robust materials with a streetscape aesthetic provides a uniform neutral backdrop to the wide spectrum of activities that will bring the building to life."

Jo Marsh, Creative Director Tŷ Pawb said:

"It's our ambition to create a programme centred on dialogue, and our new home is a flexible space in which we can engage the public in a variety of ways. We want Tŷ Pawb to be local and rooted, and also nationally-facing; for it to be as much a part of daily life for people living in Wrexham as it is a destination for people living further afield."

Phil George, Arts Council of Wales, said:

"Arts Council of Wales is a profound believer that cultural activity can be a driver for regeneration and bringing places to life. We are thrilled with the siting of the arts centre in one of the town's most famous markets with strong traditions and associations for young



people. Featherstone Young responded so imaginatively to the challenge of this building. It will be a valuable and energising resource.”

Harry James, Architect Assessor for Arts Council of Wales, said:

“Tŷ Pawb is an exciting proposition; it creates new opportunities to a much wider audience than traditional arts centres... and should provide an exciting model for others to follow.”

FACTS AND CREDITS

Address	Market Street, Wrexham LL13 8DA
Gross internal area	3,705 sq m (Ground floor: 3,050 sq m, First floor: 655 sq m)
Construction value	£4.5m
Schedule	Appointed July 2015; Construction: Jan 2017–Apr 2018
Client	Wrexham County Borough Council
Architect	Featherstone Young
Design Team	Sarah Featherstone, Benedetta Rogers, Ed Soden
Project Architects	Benedetta Rogers, Ed Soden
Structural Engineer	Civic up to stage 3; Haltec stage 4–5 (appointed by Wynne Construction)
Services Engineer	Ingine, formerly Michael Popper Associates, up to stage 3; ESD stage 4–5 (appointed by Wynne Construction)
Civil Engineer	Civic up to stage 3, Haltec stage 4–5
Landscape Design	Grant Associates
QS	Stockdale stage 3, SP Projects stage 4–5
Building Contractor	Wynne Construction
Artist/furniture maker	Tim Denton
Graphics/signage	Elfen
Photography	James Morris

NOTES TO EDITORS

Featherstone Young

Featherstone Young is an award-winning architectural practice headed by Sarah Featherstone and Jeremy Young, founded in 2002. The practice is recognised internationally for innovative and inspiring architecture, and for bringing design ingenuity to civic and community projects, new-builds and heritage renovations. Featherstone Young sees architecture as a process of place-making; capturing a sense of place and identity is a crucial part of their design thinking. As a result, each of their buildings has unique and distinct qualities that respond both to a sense of place, as well as to the ethos of the building commissioner and end user. In public projects they are credited for listening to various users and navigating a complex brief to create inspiring and beguiling spatial sequences.

Built works include: Waddington Studios in London (2015); installations at Central St Martins, University of the Arts London (2014); Dellow Arts and Activity Centre, for a homeless charity (2011); and SERICC (South Essex Crisis Centre), a building renovation which branded the centre with its signature ‘listening ears’ (2007). The practice has earned a reputation for building overtly modern, site-specific houses in rural settings, among them Jack Windmill, South Downs National Park (2017) and Ty Hedfan, Brecon Beacons (2010).

Jack Windmill received an RIBA South East Award 2017 and RIBA South East Conservation Award 2017.



Featherstone Young combines teaching with practice: Sarah teaches on the MA Narrative Environments course at Central St Martins, University of the Arts London (UAL), and is a visiting critic and external examiner at various UK architecture schools.

featherstoneyoung.com

Tŷ Pawb

For 43 years Oriel Wrecsam was housed within the town's central library. Over the years Oriel Wrecsam built a reputation for high-quality programming, with exhibiting artists including Rose Wylie, Joseph Beuys and Helen Sear among many, many others. Tŷ Pawb is a new space for dialogue around social and civic issues such as health, education, cultural identity and sustainability. Tŷ Pawb presents a contemporary programme of welcoming and inclusive exhibitions, socially-engaged projects and live performance. Creative Director Jo Marsh leads a programme emphasising skills and craft, working with emerging and established artists from all backgrounds. 'Community Thursdays' is an important aspect of the programme to engage the wider community.

www.typawb.wales

Tim Denton

Established furniture and commercial interior designer Tim Denton was commissioned by Oriel Wrecsam to design the bespoke furniture for Tŷ Pawb. Based in Manchester, Tim's work ranges from furniture design to exhibitions, commercial interiors and temporary structures, creating high quality, innovative and visually interesting interior pieces, often with a community participation element.

timdenton.info/wp

Elfen

Elfen is a multi-award winning bilingual design company based in Cardiff Bay. Formed in 1997 by Guto Evans and Gwion Prydderch, the company has built a reputation for creating captivating images, powerful messages and successful brands that deliver impressive results for a wide variety of clients. Over the past 20 years, Elfen has worked with local, national and international companies delivering creative and strategic solutions to their communication needs.

www.elfen.co.uk



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